



## Lesson Two: Sexual Assault Myths

- Method of Instruction:** Self Assessment Inventory/Video/Small Group Discussion
- Total Time Alloted:** 90 minutes (with a 15 minute break included)
- Media:** Dr. David Lisak's "The Undetected Rapist"  
Slide 12 and 13
- Handouts:** #2: Acceptance of Sexual Assault Myths Scale  
#3: Myths and Facts of Sexual Assault  
#4: Questions Re: "The Undetected Rapist" video
- References:** Fisher, B.S.; Cullen, F.T. and Turner, M.G. (2000) *The Sexual Victimization of College Women*. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice: Washington, DC
- Lisak, D and Miller P. (1999) *Unmasking the Undetected Rapist*. National Symposium on Non-Stranger Sexual Assault.
- Rennison, C.M. (2002). *Rape and Sexual Assault: Reporting to the Police and Medical Attention, 1992-2000*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: Washington, DC.
- Rennison, C.M. and Rand, M. (2003). *Criminal Victimization, 2002*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics: Washington, DC.

---

Show Slide 12 (Lesson Title Slide)



## Lesson Two

### Sexual Assault Myths



---

**1. (5 minutes):** Inform students of lesson overview and learning objectives

**Overview:** This lesson is designed to give attendees an opportunity to explore their own attitudes regarding sexual assault and to attempt to challenge beliefs that may prevent obstacles to a UVA's ability to work with a victim in a respectful manner.

**Show Slide 13  
(Learning  
Objectives)**



**Learning Objectives**

- Begin to identify personal beliefs related to sexual assault myths.
- Identify widely held myths pertaining to sexual assault and gain awareness of the facts that dispel them.
- Understand some of the actions taken by sexual assailants to create an opportunity to commit a sexual assault.

---

**2. (15 minutes)** Presentation: Self-Assessment of Sexual Assault Myths

Inform attendees that you will be giving them an opportunity to assess their own acceptance of sexual assault myths. Distribute the scale (Handout #2) and instruct the attendees to complete the instrument. The response categories range from "1" which is for statements with which they "strongly disagree" to "7" for statements with which they "strongly agree." Encourage them to make sure they don't reverse the scale. When they are finished, they should set it aside in a place where they can easily retrieve it at the end of the day. Let them know you encourage them to retake the measure at the end of the day and periodically as they work with victims to see if their scores change. Make sure they notice that the higher their score, the higher the likelihood that they agree with the myths. If their scores suggest strong acceptance of the myths, and if the scores remain unchanged, encourage them to talk with you or the person who assigned them as a UVA as this may suggest a poor match for UVA duties.



**3. (15 minutes)** Presentation: Review of sexual assault myths and data that disprove the myths.

**Presentation:** In this section, the instructor will lead a brief discussion of attitudes related to sexual assault. Pass out handout # 3 “Myths and Facts of Sexual Assault.” Ask attendees to briefly review it. The instructor will not need to address each item individually. The following are prompts for discussion: Ask attendees if they are surprised by any of the information. Ask them if they perceive that any of the myths are widely held on their installation. What do they think contributes to the acceptance of these myths? Ask if there are other myths that are not included on the handout. Ask the class to address whether they believe the statements that are identified are myths or facts and to discuss how they came to that conclusion.

---

**4. (10 minutes)** Video “The Undetected Rapist”

Inform the attendees that they will be watching a 10 minute video that was prepared by Dr. David Lisak, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts. Let them know that the video portrays a sexual predator who was a pre-law student in a fraternity. While the man on the video is an actor; the transcript for this video is from an actual interview.

After the video is over release the group for a break and instruct them to return to small groups of 6-10 (depending on class size) for a discussion of the video and how it relates to myths of sexual assault and common attitudes of which they may be aware.

---

**5. (15 minutes)** Break

---

**6. (30 minutes)** Small group discussion

**Note to instructor:** Provide handout #3 “Questions Re: ‘The Undetected Rapist’ video” to an individual in each of the small groups. Encourage the groups to use the questions to discuss the video, their reactions to it, and how the information portrayed might influence their interaction with a sexual assault victim.